

**Town of Mansfield Parking Steering Committee for Storrs Center
Tuesday, December 8, 2009
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office
1244 Storrs Road (behind People's United Bank in Storrs Commons)**

6:00 PM

Minutes

Members Present: Karla Fox (Chair), Paul Aho, Martha Funderburk, Manny Haidous, Meredith Lindsey, Ralph Pemberton, Mike Taylor

Ex-Officio Members Present: Matthew Hart, Andy Hill, Lon Hultgren, Macon Toledano, Cynthia van Zelm

1. Call to Order

Chair Karla Fox called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

As this was Paul Aho's first meeting, Committee members introduced themselves.

2. Approval of Minutes of November 2, 2009

Committee members approved the minutes by consensus.

3. Background on Storrs Center Parking

Ms. Fox had asked staff to provide some more background on the parking demands for Storrs Center.

Ms. van Zelm referenced the Power Point presentation and reviewed the types, and location of parking planned for Storrs Center as well as the total spaces by type. *Ms. Fox asked that copies of presentations be provided to the Committee in hard copy for the meeting, and in color if applicable.

Macon Toledano reviewed parking for Phase 1 (1A, 1B, 1C). He indicated that most of the parking will be located in the first structure – the intermodal center. Additional parking will be available in the current UConn lot that serves Bishop Center pending the finalization of an agreement with UConn. The spaces that are potentially used for Storrs Center in this area will be replaced 1 for 1 with expansion and reconfiguration of the lots for UConn uses. There also may be a few spaces available near the Daily Campus.

Mr. Toledano said the sequencing of the Phase 1 spaces will depend on how soon tenants in Phil's, the Store 24 building and Storrs Automotive can be moved to Phase 1A. The intermodal center is planned to be under construction at the same time as Phase 1A. With respect to timing, Mr. Toledano said that the start of Phase 1A depends on the timing with respect

to financing. It will take about 12 to 15 months to construct 1A and the prefab for the intermodal center.

With respect to a question on the timing of Storrs Road, Mr. Toledano said the Town has grants for Storrs Road and it is in design. The Town also has grants to start the infrastructure for Phase 1A including the improvements of the intersections of Dog Lane and Storrs Road, and Bolton Road and Storrs Road.

Mike Taylor asked where the customers for 1A will park. Mr. Toledano said he expected that they will park in the intermodal center, or on-street. Mr. Taylor said some of the uses will be grab and go so people will want to park as close as possible to the business. Mr. Toledano acknowledged that one of the key questions businesses ask is where is will their parking be located. He said that one of the goals of the project is to make it friendly to alternative modes of transportation whether they be buses, by feet, etc. The goal is also for people to use Storrs Center for several uses at once so that trips are cut down. Mr. Taylor favors the paradigm shift but it will take some education.

Manny Haidous asked how many residential spaces are planned for 1A. Mr. Toledano said that approximately 123 units are planned. Mr. Toledano said they will be expected to have “nested”/designated spaces in the garage that they will pay for to use. He said the zoning for project requires that each resident have 1.25 spaces.

Mr. Toledano said that spaces on Storrs Road were not counted toward the inventory for zoning requirements as it was unclear at the time whether the State Traffic Commission would allow parking on Storrs Road.

Mr. Toledano said the current estimated breakdown for spaces for Phase 1 is as follows: 538 for the intermodal center, 20 on-street, and 155 in surface lots. Mr. Toledano said that these 713 spaces are close to half of the total spaces as much of the project is focused on the town square/Phase 1.

Ms. van Zelm referenced the slide that shows the adjacent private and public parking lots to Storrs Center. Ms. Fox noted that some parking will be displaced when the new buildings for the School of Fine Arts are constructed.

4. Fee for Service Overview and Discussion

Andy Hill reviewed the cost of parking spaces and methods to finance parking.

Mr. Hill reviewed the range of costs for types of parking spaces. He said that a parallel parking space typically costs between \$500 and \$750 a space. He said that on the low end, a surface lot space is \$2,500 to \$2,700. These costs do not include landscaping; minimal curbing, striping and lighting. If these elements are added, the cost can be as much as \$5,000 a space.

Mr. Hill said that structured parking spaces are running about \$15,000 a space. Below grade structured parking is about \$30,000 per space.

He also noted the importance of maintaining facilities and spaces on a regular basis to prevent damage. He said that maintenance and labor costs will cost approximately \$750 a space.

Mr. Hill noted that no parking is really “free” and that even at a mall, the costs are being subsidized in some way.

Mr. Hill reviewed the pros and cons of financing mechanisms including general obligation bonds, tax increment financing, private loans, pro rata payments, and fee for service.

Ms. Fox said the Committee needs to review external and internal costs.

Mr. Taylor expressed concern about how paid parking may affect the use of his and other lots where there is no direct charge. He noted the importance of monitoring and enforcement tools for his and others' lots. Mr. Toledano said the issue of the interplay between Storrs Center parking spaces and adjacent lots is a major one and will be main objective for the Committee to review.

Matt Hart and Mr. Toledano noted that the finance mechanisms discussed are largely based on retiring debt. The initial intermodal center will be paid for by state and federal grants. The key for that facility are the operations and maintenance costs.

Mr. Hill showed the slides of parking rates at facilities at UConn, West Hartford, and downtown Hartford.

Mr. Hill referred to the slide showing comparable communities to Mansfield where there is a college(s) and there is some type of fee for service for the parking downtown. He said that all these communities had to wrestle with the issue of fee for service. In his experience, Mr. Hill said the communities where the parking works the best is where a committee has been set up and continued to guide the process.

Ms. van Zelm said she is researching college/university communities to determine their costs, structures and management of parking downtown. She will work with Mr. Hill and try to have a report by the January meeting. Ms. Fox said it would be helpful to know what types of parking these communities have and whether it is charged, and, if so, is there a different fee for different types or areas.

Mr. Hill has been working on peer reviewing the projected revenues and expenses for Phase 1 as prepared by Desman Associates for master developer LeylandAlliance. He will be able to provide an update for the Committee.

The Committee also discussed that different users will have different needs in terms of the location of parking i.e., customers should be close to a place of business while tenants and employees may not need to be as close to the business.

Mr. Haidous suggested the Committee also look at whether other entities such as UConn have a need for parking that may be able to be filled at Storrs Center on an interim basis.

5. Topic for next meeting

The next meeting will focus on looking at Phase 1 parking specifically, what other comparable communities have in place for parking, and the discussion of various monitoring and enforcement mechanisms for the Storrs Center parking and the adjacent parking lots.

6. Communications

Ms. van Zelm referred to the background material that was mailed out earlier. There were no questions on the material.

7. Public Comment

David Freudmann, 22 Eastwood Road, again referred to the PowerPoint presentation that was given to the Town Council and the public in March 2009. He encouraged the Committee to focus on the cost of operating the parking. He encouraged the Committee to talk to other communities with similar projects. He expressed concerns about the cash flow projections, estimate of daily car use, and the operating costs, particularly payroll, for the garage.

Mr. Taylor noted that during the school year, his lot is constantly in turnover and suggested there may not be enough spaces in the project during the UConn school year.

Mr. Toledano reiterated that a majority of the users, especially in the structured parking, will be residents who will be required to have a space in the development if they have a car.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.